

# Your Gateway to Aotearoa

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## Themed Highways

These routes are marked with distinctive brown road signs. For more information visit: [newzealand.com/int/themed-highways](http://newzealand.com/int/themed-highways)

### North Island

**Twin Coast Discovery Highway:** This route begins in Auckland and travels north, tracing both coasts to Cape Reinga and back. Driving is easy and interesting. Highlights include a procession of beautiful beaches, opportunities for fishing, surfing, diving and dolphin encounters; cultural experiences at Waitangi; forest hikes and craft shopping.

**Pacific Coast Highway:** Linking the Coromandel, Bay of Plenty and Eastland with Auckland in the north and Hawke's Bay in the south, the Pacific Coast Highway takes you to spectacular coastal scenery and beaches, forest wilderness and grape growing districts. This route should go down the Pohutukawa Coast, through Clevedon and around the Firth of Thames. The cities of Tauranga, Gisborne, Napier and Hastings will satisfy your urge to wine, dine and shop.

**Thermal Explorer Highway:** This route runs between Auckland and Hawke's Bay, travelling through the volcanic centre of the island. You'll have the chance to discover the caves around Waitomo in the Hamilton & Waikato region, geothermal areas in Rotorua and Lake Taupō, the amazing Tongariro National Park and Hawke's Bay Wine Country. Expect equal quantities of relaxation and adventure. When combined, the Pacific Coast Highway and Thermal Explorer are known as The Great New Zealand Touring Route.

**Forgotten World Highway:** The 150km Forgotten World Highway (State Highway 43) is a memorable driving journey through stunningly scenic untouched landscapes. Following ancient Māori trade routes and 19th century bridle paths, the highway connects Taumarunui to Stratford. The route wiggles its way over four mountain saddles, through an eerie one-way tunnel and along a sinuous river gorge, passing through the unique Republic of Whangamōmona.

**Desert Loop:** From the trout town of Tūrangi, you can circle the volcanoes of Tongariro National Park by following state highways 47, 4, 49 and 1. On a clear day, you'll enjoy spectacular views of the mountains and the volcanic terrain that surrounds them. The stretch known as the 'Desert Road', which cuts across the desolate Rangipo Desert, is particularly memorable.

**Adventure Highway:** With the legendary landscapes of Tongariro National Park to the east and Whanganui National Park to the west, the Adventure Highway is where the journey truly becomes the destination. From the mountains to the rivers and the hidden gems in between, this lesser-known touring route winds through the heart of Ruapehu and offers a mix of year-round activities to enjoy. Winding down from the top of the Eight Mile Junction north of Taumarunui on State Highway 4 to Waiouru along State Highway 49, discover world-heritage sites, culture, community, and unique experiences that will take you to cosy alpine villages and beautiful mountain towns.

**Surf Highway 45:** The 105km Highway that traces the Taranaki coast is known as Surf Highway 45 for the countless surf breaks that can be found at the end of almost every road that leads to the coast. The top spots have fascinating names - the Kumara Patch, Greyscares, Secret Spot, and Green Meadows to mention a few, and they are handily punctuated by cosy cafés feeding surfers and adventurers alike.

**Manawatu Scenic Route:** A scenic alternative to State Highway One, this route takes you on journeys between the highways through rural landscapes. Discover hidden places and tucked away treasures ranging from country cafés and pubs; heritage sites, galleries and gardens, to scenic areas, day walks, swimming holes, glow-worm caves, picnic areas, and camping spots. Meet the locals and enjoy world-class scenery from the roadside.

**Classic New Zealand Wine Trail:** Weaving through three major wine regions, the Classic New Zealand Wine Trail serves up unforgettable wine and food experiences along the 380km route, spanning the North and South Islands. This self-guided drive takes visitors through Hawke's Bay, Wairarapa, and Marlborough, home to some 230 wineries. At the heart of the trail lies Wellington, New Zealand's capital, the perfect place for a culinary and cultural stopover.

### South Island

**Classic New Zealand Wine Trail:** See details above.

**Alpine Pacific Touring Route:** The Alpine Pacific Touring Route takes you to the wine and food experiences of Wairarapa, the spa delights of Hamner Springs and the marine mammal encounters of Kaikōura. Between scenic destinations, you'll enjoy beautiful country scenery.

**The Inland Scenic T2 Route:** The perfect road journey for travellers who like to get off the main highways and find real rural life. The route starts at Amberley, in the north of the Canterbury region, and runs to Winchester, where it links to State Highway 1. There are fabulous views of the Southern Alps on one side of the road, complemented by the green serenity of the Canterbury Plains on the other.

**The Great Alpine Highway:** This coast-to-coast route traverses the Southern Alps. From Christchurch, the 55-kilometre route follows State Highway 72 west across river plains before rising to traverse through Porters Pass and Arthur's Pass National Park. Highlights include the impressive Waimakariri and Otira River gorges, driving along the Otira Viaduct and exploring natural wonders like the Castle Hill Rocks and Cave Stream Reserve.

**Great Coast Road:** The Great Coast Road stretches from Westport down to Kumara. It meanders alongside the ancient limestone cliffs of Paparoa National Park, where the world's smallest penguin resides, through Charleston and down to Punakaiki, home to the famous Pancake Rocks and Blow-holes. Driving it in one go only takes about 90 minutes, but it's best to slow down, enjoy the ride and explore some of New Zealand's small towns.

**Glacier Highway:** The Glacier Highway hugs the coastline from Kumara, through Hokitika and all the way down to Glacier Country. This 200-kilometre journey is surrounded with dense coastal scrub and West Coast rainforest, making it one of New Zealand's most scenic routes. It passes through a national park, seal colonies, beaches, lakes, and as its namesake states, mighty glaciers.

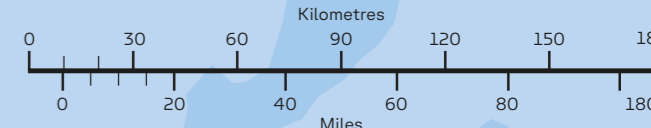
**Central Otago Touring Route:** This 341-kilometre journey follows scenic highways from Otago/Dunedin and the Pacific Ocean to the foot of the Southern Alps at Queenstown. It winds through the heart of Central Otago taking in characterful settlements such as Middelmarich, Ranfurly, Otarehua and Clyde, as well as the larger towns of Alexandra, Cromwell, Arrowtown and Queenstown. Take the road less travelled and enjoy the memorable local hospitality of Otago.

**Southern Scenic Route:** Starting in the historic city of Dunedin, this route follows the wild southern coast to Invercargill, then continues west and north to Te Anau before ending at Queenstown. Highlights include wildlife encounters along the Catlins coast, the classic motors of Invercargill, cruising Fiordland, walking the Milford Track and the southern local delicacies found throughout.

Motuekahi / Great 1

## DRIVE TIMES (hours)

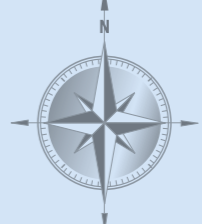
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- State Highway
- Main Road
- Railway
- Ferry Route
- isite Visitor Information Centres
- DOC Visitor Information Centres

## NORTH ISLAND / TE IKA-A-MĀUI

## SOUTH ISLAND / TE WAIPOUNAMU



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Cathedral Cove The Coromandel

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